

Christie Administration Awards \$1M to 15 Districts for Participation in Achievement Coaches Teacher Leadership Program

For Immediate Release

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Trenton, NJ – The New Jersey Department of Education today announced that 15 districts have been selected to receive a share of \$1 million in competitive grant funds for the expansion of the state's Achievement Coaches initiative.

First launched in February 2015, the Achievement Coaches program is designed to recognize outstanding teachers and administrators across New Jersey and provide them with the opportunity to design and deliver professional learning sessions to their peers statewide. In the first year of the program, 19 school districts selected 158 Achievement Coaches to participate in rigorous training. These educators have now led that same training with over 4,000 teachers in 60 districts.

The Department will work with six "Training Team" districts that participated in the first year of the program and have again been awarded 2016 grants to incorporate new resources and materials into refined training sessions. This will include PARCC data reports and teacher-created formative assessments, among other resources. These educators also will lead the training of 13 new groups of teachers and administrators (approximately 80 educators) across nine new districts receiving Achievement Coach awards for the first time. The six Training Team districts will split \$400,000 in grant funds, while the remaining \$600,000 will go to the nine Achievement Coach districts. (See below for a list of grantees.)

"The Achievement Coaches initiative continues to be an impactful program that allows the state to rely on the expertise and professionalism of our best New Jersey educators to support and help train other educators," said Commissioner of Education David C. Hespe. "We look forward to working with many returning participants, as well as the nine new districts, to make this program even more effective and far-reaching in 2016."

Training Team districts that participated in the 2015 Achievement Coaches program are eager to continue the work. According to Diane Cummins, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction at the Clearview Regional High School District, "The continuation of our Achievement Coaches grant provides our district with the resources to develop and implement a teacher-led, comprehensive professional learning plan that utilizes professional collaborative cohorts and instructional coaches to support our educators."

Jason Lynch, Vice Principal of Jonas Salk Middle School in Old Bridge Township, added, "This program has revitalized local professional development, shaped teacher leaders, and allowed teachers and administrators to reflect upon current practices."

New districts receiving 2016 Achievement Coach awards look forward to using this program to benefit their educators. Melissa Williams, Assistant Superintendent in the Delsea Regional School District, credits her district's pursuit of this grant opportunity to be directly related to their earlier training by Achievement Coaches from another district. "Based on the training session we participated in," she said, "all involved agreed that the program would be beneficial to the Delsea staff's professional growth."

Michelle Vella, Assistant Superintendent in the North Plainfield School District, said, "This is an opportunity to empower outstanding educators and provide these educators with the opportunity to further develop as leaders, both in North Plainfield and in neighboring districts, resulting in having a broader impact on students and colleagues."

For more information on the program, visit the [Achievement Coaches website](#).

2016 Achievement Coaches Grant Recipients:

Achievement Coaches Training Team (Returning from Year One)

COUNTY	SCHOOL DISTRICT
Gloucester	Clearview Regional

Middlesex	East Brunswick
Middlesex	Old Bridge Township
Morris	Morris County Vocational- Technical
Ocean	Jackson Township
Union	Elizabeth

New 2016 Achievement Coaches Districts

COUNTY	SCHOOL DISTRICT
Camden	Gloucester Township
Gloucester	Delsea Regional
Gloucester	East Greenwich Township
Hudson	Jersey City
Mercer	Lawrence Township
Middlesex	Piscataway Township
Middlesex	Sayreville
Ocean	Lacey Township
Somerset	North Plainfield